

# BASICS

## Warming up the vibrato

Here is an excellent warm-up sequence for vibrato. You can play it all in just six minutes. Or take notes from your repertoire where you would like to enhance the vibrato, and do just stages 1-4 on that finger on that note. Or if you have time, do the whole sequence. Afterwards you will find that the vibrato is immensely improved when you come to that note in the continuity of playing. The effects of the warm-up are accumulative: you need to do it less and less often the more you do it.

Repeat each stage with each finger. Play through as a continual sequence.

Fig. 1

Caption:

Roll the finger forwards from here into the string



### (1) Heavy-light finger-pressure only (without the bow)

Do not press the string down with the finger. Instead, start with the finger resting on the surface of the string, slightly more on its pad than for playing the note normally (Fig. 1), and then roll the finger forward on its pad towards the fingertip. As it does so the string is pressed down (Fig. 2). Feel the buoyancy of the string as it resists the finger, and its release as the finger rolls back again.

Fig. 2

Caption:

Notice how the string is pushed down as you roll forwards



### (2) Curving and straightening the nail joint (without the bow)

Make the finger give at the nail joint: roll forward on to the tip and let the nail joint curve (Fig. 3); roll backwards on to the pad and let the nail joint straighten (Fig. 4).

Fig. 3

Caption:

Straighten and bend the finger at the nail joint: roll forwards and bend



### (3) Pulling and pushing the knuckles in and out (without the bow)

Push the hand in towards the neck of the violin as far as possible, and pull back out again, as far as possible.

Fig. 4

Caption:

Roll backwards and straighten

As you push and pull allow the finger to curve and straighten. Try to keep the wrist in a straight line throughout.

### (4) Moving the left hand in upright circles (without the bow)

Move the left hand in upright circles like a wheel. Pull back-and-down, up, up-and-forward, and down again into the string. Allow the finger to straighten (back) and curve (into the note). Feel the finger-pressure releasing as you pull back-and-down in the circle, and increasing as you return back into the string at the end of the circle.

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## (5) Vibrate in rhythms with the metronome

Each diamond-note represents one vibrato 'ping'. The x-notes represent the backward releasing movement of the finger (flattening the pitch and making a harmonic-like, feathery tone).

Roll the finger forward with a feeling of one action: forward into the in-tune note, forward, forward, forward - not forward-back:

Each day play with the metronome at different speeds:

Crotchet = 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 105, 110, 115, 120



[2'30" at ♩ = 90]

Fig. 5  
Caption:  
Push the hand in as far as possible towards the neck

Fig. 6  
Caption:  
Pull out as far as possible away from the neck